Strategy Research Project

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND INFLUENCING CHANGE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT C. HORNECK
United States Army

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

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Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Horneck
United Stated Army

Colonel Gregory L. Cantwell
Project Adviser

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

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UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND INFLUENCING CHANGE

In an information centric, globally connected world, tremendous changes abound. Leaders in this environment must maintain situational awareness of the changes going on around them on a daily basis and understand how these changes influence individuals and groups. Often small changes produce the greatest secondary affects and long term impacts. Individuals bring their own values and cultures to an organization, from the smallest family to the largest international organization. Leadership is the "attitude and motivation to examine and manage culture" occurring at any level within an organization.[1] Leaders must appreciate the role of values, culture, and beliefs before attempting change in an organization. In a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment, with many surrounding variables and situations, strategic vision can become clouded by information over load. This paper provides strategic leaders with guidelines and insights to leverage the impact of culture on groups and individuals to affect strategic change in an organization to accomplish organizational objectives. It enables a leader's understanding of culture and how to influence change by: defining culture, comparing different cultures, identifying cultural change agents, and messaging change.

Defining Culture

Understanding relationships between individuals is difficult and often misunderstood because of the numerous terms and definitions associated with culture. For leaders to effectively lead organizations, they must understand how culture is derived, defined, and aligned within any grouping of individuals in an organization. To facilitate this understanding it is important to define culture and organizations. The

strategic leader is responsible for examining the formulation of culture in order to assist the leader in identifying deep seated values. They identify the visibly observable manifestations of culture which provide the cultural foundations, and characterizations for various cultures within societies or groups of individuals.

To gain an appreciation for what culture means, it is important to understand key terms associated with culture and organizations within societies. Social anthropologist, Geert Hofstede defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others." [2] This statement shows how our surroundings impact individual reactions to varying situations. Culturalists have proposed and sought numerous ways to classify and categorize groups or organizations to predict, clarify, and understand, behavior while attempting to avoid offending or segregating cultures.[3] Because cultures are closely associated with - and manifested differently in - organizations, it is important to understand the linkage between culture and organizations. An organization is generally referred to as a collection of individuals brought together to satisfy common needs, coordinate action, and obtain something they value.[4] An organizational culture is defined as "the shared values and norms controlling an individual's interaction with each other both in and outside the group".[5] Regardless of how culture is classified, it is essential to understand that individual preferences and motivations drive the individuals within the organization, group or society.

Abraham Maslow, a well know psychologist, provided the basis for understanding the individual and the individual's reaction to culture with his development of the hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, in order to meet their full potential, individuals

must generally satisfy needs at the lower level of hierarchy before the higher level needs become more influential in establishing an individual's behavior.[6] Although an individual must internally realize that they have met their needs at one level before moving to the next, this is not a fixed requirement, since individuals will revert to satisfy lower levels of needs satisfaction when faced with an extreme situation.[7] Basic needs generally become unconsciously accepted for all human beings the longer the needs are more fully satisfied.[8] Common experiences of anthropologists who study people in societies determined that the longer individuals from different societies interact at the individual level, the more they tend to find commonalities; thus recognizing differences as more superficial cultural desires or behaviors and not common basic needs.[9] This supports the position that at the lowest level of common cultural understanding, people from different societies may share more in common than one might originally be led to believe.

Figure 1 portrays Schein's Cultural Model, as depicted by Gerras, Wong, and Allen in their paper "Organizational Culture: Applying a Hybrid Model to the U.S. Army", which proposed three levels of culture know as: artifacts, norms and values, and underlying assumptions.
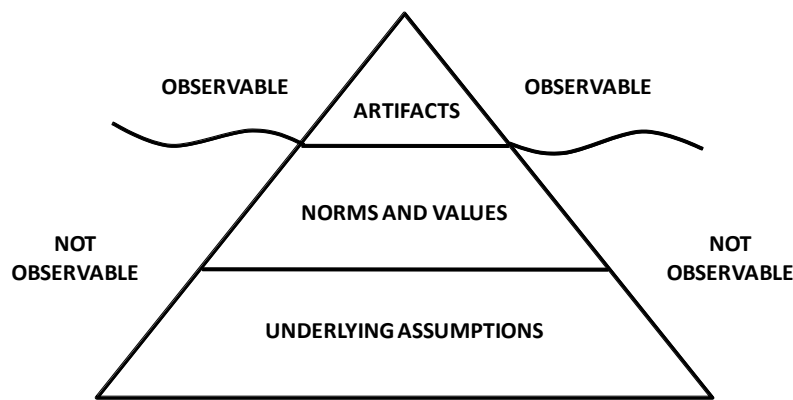

Figure 1. Schein's Culture Model[10]

Schein, an organizational psychologist, proposed that the first level, known as artifacts, are the observable or most visibly identifiable aspects of our inner character manifested to the average observer through our outward actions. These cultural artifacts are evident by the way individual members dress, talk, and conduct ceremonies.[11] The second level, norms and values and the third level underlying assumptions are not generally observable as they tend to be unconsciously accepted rules and beliefs. However, these rules and beliefs affect the way people react in a variety of situations.[12] Therefore, it is important for the strategic leaders to understand these factors before they can affect change.

Figure 2 similarly portrays Hofstede's cultural model. He provided a similar approach to understanding individual cultural relationships.
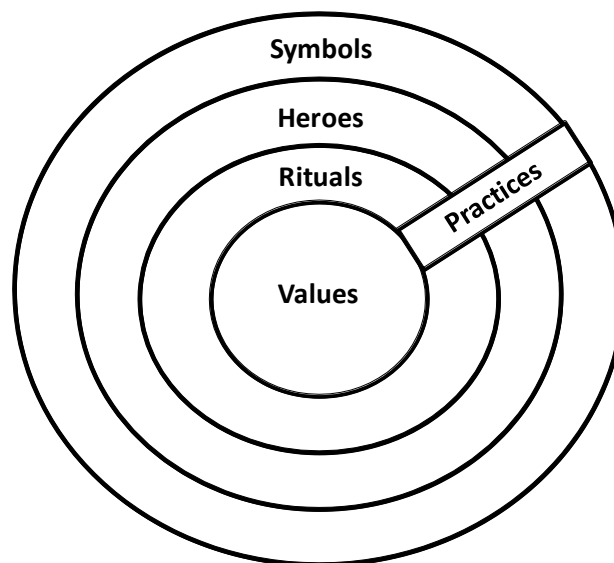

Figure 2. Hofstede Cultural Model[13]

In his model, values are tendencies and preferences normally developed early in our lives forming the foundations of who we are as individuals within a culture.[14] These values serve as the founding rules and beliefs, providing the purpose and direction

responsible for embedding cultural tendencies within individuals and societies. Some examples of these embedded values are identified in how individuals categorize and emphasize the distinctions between "evil versus good" or "moral versus immoral" etc.[15] Similar to the artifacts in the Schein model, rituals, heroes and symbols, grouped under the term practices, tend to remain visible but their cultural meaning is invisible to outside observers.[16] Expanding the definition of practices helps to explain the importance of how the visible effects of culture are engrained in us as individuals as well as individuals within a group or society.

The first practice identified as a ritual is often considered as socially essential in groups or societies and may include: greetings, paying respect, religious, and social ceremonies, to name a few. Heroes are identified in cultures as those individuals, "alive or dead, real or imaginary", idolized by a culture because they espouse and possess highly prized characteristics and attributes representing the cultural model of the group.[17] The last and most superficial level of culture is the symbols. These are words, gestures, symbols, pictures and objects recognized by those within the society. They are easily developed, copied, and even discarded when no longer of use.[18]

Strategic leaders must consider that cultural differences may outnumber commonalities when two organizations interact. This commonly occurs when many cultural definitions and terms are used to categorize groups or individuals within the groups.[19] However, generalization of individual relationships within a culture allows the observer to draw conclusions about the culture. For example, it is possible to group and define cultures as "linear active cultures which tend to consist of task oriented, highly organized, planners where as multi-active cultures are made of people oriented,

loquacious, interrelators and reactive cultures are introverted, and respect oriented listeners."[20] When trying to identify and understand culture, the tendency is to group and generalize people into categories to analyze the relationships between individuals in environments or groups. It is important to understand that the further a group is broken down, toward the individual level, the less relevant these categorizations and generalizations remain.[21] This provides the strategic leader: the mental awareness of the dynamics and importance of the individual, their relationships to one another, and categorization of those individuals within different groups in societies and organizations.

Definitions of cultures are further affected by the personal and psychological factors acting within a culture based on age, gender, and profession. These factors cause individual adjustments in tendencies toward certain categorizations based on individual views and understanding of where they fit in these categories.[22] Reflecting on different categorizations of culture highlights the risk in marginalizing the personal psychological traits an individual brings to the group or organization. These traits ground the individual in the support of their commitments to themselves and their groups. Regardless of the culture, groups evolve, expand, emerge or diverge from other groups. These associations satisfy the individual basic needs before transforming to more social or higher levels of beliefs or values. These higher level beliefs influenced by climate, history, religion, and language are easy for certain cultures to restructure, thus meeting the general requirements of the majority of the individuals in the organization.[23] These beliefs are supported by the data collected by Hofstede. He discovered that the foundations of culture show no indication the values spheres of the same generations from various countries are converging.[24] Hofstede argued "young Afghans differ from

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older Afghans the same way young Americans differ from old Americans as much as young Afghans differ from young Americans and old Afghans differ from old Americans".[25] Simply stated, all young people and old people are not the same although they may share some deeply seated cultural similarities. These differences are due to the shift in cultures from one generation to the next over time as societies or organizations evolve. The wide variations between individuals in the same cultures depending on their age, gender, social class and other relationships within the group or society must be recognized by strategic leaders.

Comparing and Analyzing Cultures

With a firm understanding for the importance of culture within an organization, a leader can gain awareness of the differences between how one society views another. Fortunately, there are several models developed to compare, measure, and understand cultural similarities and differences at the individual and group levels within society. Culturalists regularly attempt to categorize cultures in order to draw observations and conclusions to predict behavior. Definitions provide the leader a set of terms to describe and compare cultural expectations and tendencies by comparing them to what is actually seen and documented when analyzing cultures. These categorizations and comparisons may lead to associated biases and pitfalls due to the mindsets and lenses through which we observe and align cultural description tools.

Many research teams have analyzed the pitfalls associated with cultural descriptions. The Applied Futures Corporation Team, on behalf of the Proteus Management Group, conducted research in order to recommend a limited number of "critical cultural-cognitive dimensions" to evaluate values and motivations manifested by different groups of individuals.[26] The research team identified and defined a

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comprehensive list of sixteen "cultural-cognitive dimensions" (epistemologies; ways of thinking; values, beliefs, and motivations; approaches to life; approaches to understanding; approaches to power; measures of achievement; religious beliefs; concern about honor; concern about shame; strategic time; tactical time; group orientation; assertiveness; attitudes toward death; reactions to the foreign) to describe and compare any culture - from the individual to the group - based on data collected from a variety of cultural modeling perspectives.[27]

Hofstede provided another set of definitions to compare cultures, called cultural dimensions which identified five categories for comparison (power distance; individualism versus collectivism; masculinity versus femininity; uncertainty avoidance; and, long-term versus short-term orientation) based on data collected and validated through an IBM survey of employees from fifty different countries.[28] The details and descriptions associated with the definitions and data analysis are very comprehensive for applying cultural classification using multiple models and methods.[29] This data was validated, reviewed, and correlated by various classification sources to include the GLOBE study and the World Values Survey resulting in a wealth of knowledge and materiel to compare a variety of different cultural groups.[30] The method used to collect and analyze the data measured and focused on the foundations of culture - defined as values and underlying assumptions - which are engrained societies cultures.[31]

By comparing the differences and similarities between cultures in societies it is possible to gain cultural awareness and draw some general conclusions. Hofstede collected and tabulated data from his studies a strategic leader can use to gain increased cultural awareness. Figure 3 visually depicts the relationships of different

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cultures based on their scores. It provides a graphic representation of the tabulated data

scores for the five cultural dimensions from the selected countries.
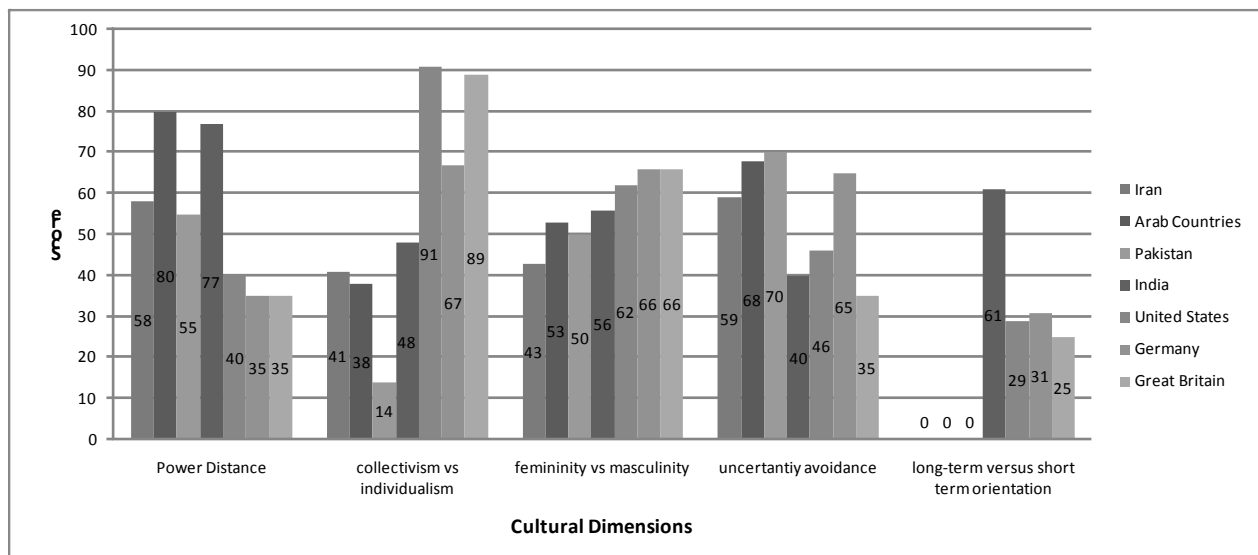
Figure 3. Graph of Cultural Dimensions for Selected Countries[32]

Where the data scores are generally close, there exists the possibility for shared cultural

understanding associated with the cultural dimension; versus those cultural dimensions

where a larger deviation exists indicating the possibility for less of a shared

understanding between cultures.[33] Comparing the scores between Pakistan and the

United States, for example, highlights a significant deviation between the scores for

each cultural dimension, indicating significant cultural differences between these

societies. To better appreciate cultural differences and raise cultural awareness, this

study will examine Hofstede's data to gain cultural awareness that can benefit a

strategic leader's awareness of Pakistan.

The first cultural dimension in the graph is power distance. Power distance is

defined as "the inequality and dependence relationships within a country with respect to

how people feel about their position in society".[34] Individuals in countries with a high

power distance score tend to accept their positions in society. They tend to be more respectful, obedient, structured, and hierarchical in their cultures displaying a strong need for dependence.[35] A large power distance culture identifies and entitles those with the power, expecting them to maintain power through families and friends. Scandals are tolerated and often covered up. If the situation gets too bad, revolution occurs; but there are very few values that change in the society despite a change in leadership. Politics for people in these countries are often based on religion rather than open debate and often are dominated by a single party system.[36] In this society leadership and status are determined by military service favoring a very hierarchical organizational structure.[37] The acceptance of position within society is evident in not only the differences amongst the upper, lower, and middle classes within Pakistani society, but also by how each of the classes within society treats women. In Pakistani culture, women in higher social classes tend to rise to higher positions in politics and occasionally business compared to those in the lowest social classes who have peasant duties and tend to be treated harshly with fewer opportunities outside the home or farm.[38] This helps the strategic leader to appreciate the importance class and culture play on the differences within a society.

The second category Hofstede analyzed, collectivism versus individualism, also provides valuable insight about an organization or culture for the strategic leader. The graph measures individualism with a score lower than fifty indicating a more collectivist society.[39] In collectivist societies, people are integrated and assimilated into strong social groupings or classes from the time of their birth, evident in the formation of extended families who offer protection for unquestioned loyalty to extended family

members.[40] Additionally, in collectivist societies, laws and the enforcement or administration of them may vary depending on the individual's class in society.[41] Although fast economic development can achieve a small level of individualism within a collective country it will not produce enough difference to significantly change the society from a collectivist to individualist culture.[42] Pakistan scores fourteen which indicates a strongly collective society. This is evident in Pakistani society where most people live in large extended families led by a strongly patriarchal structure in which the eldest son follows in the father's profession.[43]

For the third cultural dimension, femininity and masculinity, the data shows the smallest difference in scores between Pakistan and the United States indicating the possibility of some shared commonality among the individuals in both societies. The data measures masculinity, where the higher the score indicates the more masculine the culture. Masculinity is defined as assertiveness with distinct gender roles between sexes, while femininity is modesty traits displayed for both men and women in a society without a distinct separation of sexes.[44] Democratic countries considered feministic tend to elect more women to political offices and government posts unless they have a large power distance and strong uncertainty avoidance, which limits this effect.[45] Pakistani society trends toward femininity due to the general modesty displayed in the culture which defines role differences between men and women.[46] However, the modesty in Pakistani culture is being replaced by assertiveness evident by the shift in the practice of Pardah, known as seclusion, for women depending on their position within the society.[47] This is further supported by a Pakistani survey in which sixty-seven percent of the population rejected legal constraints on women.[48] This provides a strategic leader

some insights to compare similarities between how cultures view the progress of women, women's rights, and the evolution of a society.

The fourth cultural dimension, uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede described as "The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations"; usually expressed by emotions of nervousness and stress resulting in the need for predictability and both written and unwritten rules.[49] The data measures the strength of uncertainty avoidance with the higher the score indicating that the culture feels threatened by unknown situations.[50] Countries with high uncertainty avoidance prefer precise laws to provide security, even if they do not work.[51] In countries like Pakistan which possess strong uncertainty avoidance scores (70) and low individualistic scores (14) - and are collectivists - rules and laws are implied and grounded in traditions making them hard for outsiders to appreciate, understand, or follow.[52]

The fifth and final cultural dimension, long-term versus short-term orientation, is measured with the higher score correlating to long-term orientation.[53] This dimension provides the following definitions: "long-term orientation focuses on the future, perseverance and thrift; short-term orientation focuses on the past, present, traditions, social obligations, and conformity".[54] Pakistani heritage dates back over 5,000 years, is primarily Islamic, and is strongly grounded in poetry and literary art forms.[55] All of these factors, and the values Pakistani's place on them, tend to support a stronger short-term orientation within the individuals of the society.

Collectively these five dimensions provide a tremendous amount of information a strategic leader can leverage to gain an understanding and awareness of different

cultural groups. This can inform his ability to predict how different cultures tend to act in

certain situations. Those countries where a fairly close correlation between the data

exists, highlights the possibility for common understanding. Where the data collected is

generally further apart, it tends to indicate the potential for significant differences in

basic values.[56] Hofstede provides the strategic leader a method to analyze cultures to

determine areas more prone to establishing a common understanding.

However, strategic leaders must remain constantly vigilant when generalizing

cultural information based on data collected, compiled, or aggregated from various

levels in societies. To avoid bias, leaders analyzing cultures must acknowledge the

impacts of human nature and our relationships to the culture being studied. Those

considered outsiders studying a culture may not be able to understand or empathize

with the understanding an insider possesses of their culture because outsiders have not

been immersed in the culture long enough to recognize the basic assumptions.[57] The

data collected only reflects the average of multiple individual personalities in the sample

population which may or may not reflect the culture of the individual. Each individual

views cultural groups through their own mind-set; causing them to see things in a

different light, and with a unique perspective.[58] This observation supports the ideology

that at the one-on-one individual level of understanding it is possible to share more of a

common personal understanding of one another. Aside from language and traditional

barriers which complicate our understanding of individuals from different cultures at the

outset, each of us brings our own cultural barriers and biases, engrained over a lifetime,

which further complicate a shared or common understanding. Of significance to note is

that although the nation state system was only introduced in the mid-twentieth century,

following the colonial system, national boarders do not follow the cultural dividing lines of local populations. As a result the conclusions drawn from national comparisons must be used with care.[59] A strategic leader must always understand that societies - and the generalizations made to compare cultures whether they are families, clans, tribes, nations, clubs or even organizations - each have cultures that can vary as much as the individuals comprising them.

<u>Cultural Change Agents</u>

Cultural awareness and comparisons provide the strategic leader with the ability to understand and appreciate the differences within various cultural groupings. For a leader to generate change from inside or outside the group, the leader must possess the skill to determine the underlying culture of the group or organization to identify which elements of culture are possible to change, and what really needs changing.[60] To affect change, the leader must grasp the various group attributes and size relationships which facilitate change. He must identify and leverage cultural groupings and compositions to target specific cultures and subcultures for change. Finally, the leader must understand how to identify, classify, and leverage individual characteristics and traits to accomplish change within a culture or organization.

When defining cultures, it is important to recognize differences between different types or categories of culture and the age of individuals in cultural formation. Figure 4 illustrates Hofstede's relationships between different cultural levels and the formation of values and practices.
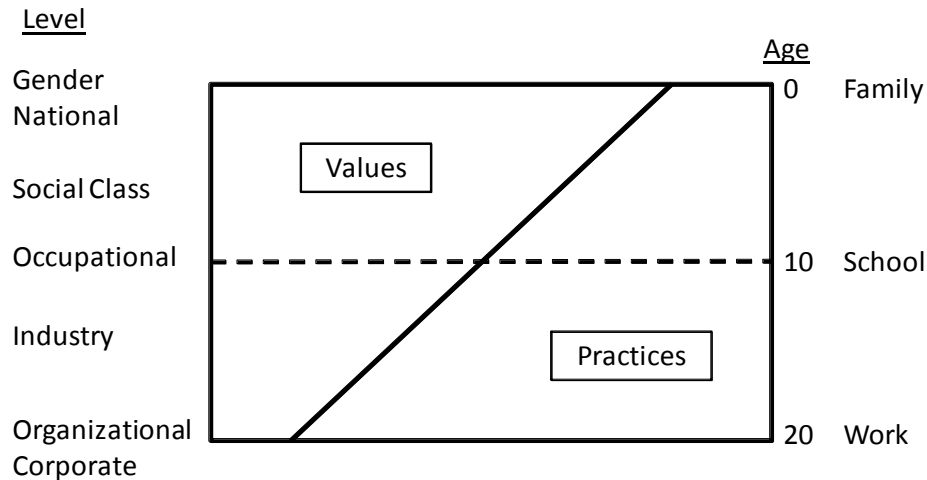
Level

Age

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Gender                                                              0    Family
National

Social Class                    ┌─────────┐
                                │ Values  │
Occupational                    └─────────┘                         10   School

Industry                                        ┌───────────┐
                                                │ Practices │
                                                └───────────┘
Organizational                                                      20   Work
Corporate
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Figure 4. Hofstede diagram of cultural relationships to cultural model[61]

Hofstede argued practices are learned throughout our lives as we continue to grow tending to take on a larger portion of our values system as we continue to age.[62] Depending on the individuals age, position or group in society, and cultural level, it is possible to leverage practices for change depending on the how deeply they are ingrained in the individual's basic values. Those cultural values that are deeply seeded in our backgrounds and based from one generation to the next, are harder to change than those cultural practices acquired later in life which tend to remain more flexible to change.[63] For example, national cultures equate to the cultural values and practices or basic values acquired and learned during the first ten years of life. Organizational cultures are those acquired values and practices received later in life and tend to be more superficial possessing the greater potential to change.[64] Comprehending this diagram, a leader is able to determine the challenges to change a group or organization's culture. It is possible to make change if a leader focuses on the right culture and subculture groupings in the society, whether it is a specific social class, religious group, or a generational grouping between older and younger members.

For a leader to change the culture or organization of a group, one option is to focus on the strength and balance of two key identity attributes within a group known as competence and integrity.[65] In this context, competence is defined as the individual's "ability to have productive social and personal relationships validated and consistent with the group norms."[66] The integrity of the group is defined as "the strength of the loyalty and ethnic ties between the beliefs of the individual and the group, serving to highlight the importance of values and motivation in group identity."[67] The power of group dynamics was addressed by Ibn Khaldun, a fourteenth-century historian "who examined tribal peoples and their relationships to centralized power."[68] He found that, "tribal cooperation, over long historical periods, deepens social and economic interactions solidifying identities."[69] This results in groups forming cooperative structures enabling them to protect their common social, political, and cultural identity.[70] This applies to the dynamics of subcultures within cultures as well. If the subcultures are in synch with the overall culture, a positive reinforcement of the overall culture occurs. On the other hand, if the subcultures are more differentiated from the overall culture, a leader may face challenges to align the cultures within the external environment.[71] This means a leader will have more difficulty affecting change.

Burke in his book *Organization Change: Theory and Practice* expands Gladwell's ideas identifying areas a leader can leverage to assist with changing culture. One of the ideas affecting cultural change is the composition and size of the group. To effect any change in a group, a leader must rely on the relationships of individuals within the group. Effecting change for shared ideas or ideals in a group becomes increasingly difficult once the group size exceeds 150.[72] This signifies the importance and priority a

leader must place on understanding different groupings and their sizes when attempting to change cultures.

　　　To produce a more general refined view of how societies function, it is useful for a leader to broadly group and define individual cultures and sub-cultures within a society. The Applied Futures Team identified and described a generic grouping of three types of individual cultures in society, known as, "Pioneers, Prospectors, and Settlers, who together compose the general system classifications of societies."[73] The first generic grouping, known as pioneers, tend to maximize their individual potential, but not at the expense of others.　They gain their success from exploring "physical, mental, and emotional boundaries", measuring their success by standards involving such things as "integrity, honesty, and quality."[74] They are distinguished from the rest of the population by their motivation, and they value the interaction of people in society.[75] Prospectors, the second group, tend to justify their self-worth and position in society through materialistic means. These individuals enjoy structured societies where they can display their successes in comparison to others.　They normally consider themselves to be better than the rest of the people in their group.　They have the energy and drive to compete and win in any venture and often reflect Western values due to their outward-directed nature.[76] The last group, the settlers, focus on fulfilling basics needs. They form strong local bonds and relationships making them more resilient to outside influences or pressures. Individuals in this group want to retain what they have and resist efforts to change. These individuals often compose the majority of the population in lesser developed nations.[77]

The traits of each of these individuals are grounded in their relationships within the overall society and to one another. For society to function efficiently, each individual within the system keeps the other in check. As one group within the system becomes more prevalent, the dynamics of the overall culture and function of the society are subject to change.[78]

Recognizing the system interaction of individuals within a society, and understanding the individual characteristics and the role each one plays in society, helps a strategic leader to target specific groups or individuals for change. The ability to further affect and define cultural change is most evident in defining the "Law of the Few". Burke refines Gladwell's definition stating that "change within organizations or groups occur because of a few people who are agents to spread the change".[79] For a strategic leader to understand how to effectively support and leverage change within society, it becomes equally important to identify those individuals in society who can assist with affecting and driving change by developing, translating, and passing the message of change. Fortunately, Gladwell in his book *The Tipping Point* identified three key personality traits called connectors, mavens, and salesmen who possess characteristics which are essential to enabling the spread of change.[80] As a result, it is important for a leader to define and identify the characteristics of these individuals who will assist with accomplishing change efforts.

Gladwell's connectors are those individuals within a society who have the special ability to bring people together and spread information. Connectors know lots of people. They are very gifted at remembering names and the connection of those names from one person to the next. One can often identify the connector because they not only

maintain a very large social circle, but often remember and use individual names when conducting normal conversations - more than the average person. They present themselves as those with a real understanding of people and their relationships to one another. They enjoy collecting people's names and adding them to their mental list as a hobby. They thrive on understanding the networks and connections of one person to the next, growing their human capital data base as they proceed through their lives. They serve as change agents in a group because of their ability to spread the change message. This ability to speed change is based on the number of people they know as well as the types of people they know.[81]

The next group, known as the mavens, Gladwell argued, possess the ability to accumulate knowledge and information. These individuals are identified by their propensity to understand and analyze data looking for trends to verify or disprove the accuracy of what interests them. They are obsessive collectors of information who display a high affinity for using numbers and hard facts in normal conversation. Once a maven gathers information, they prefer to share it with others. The maven thrives on solving not only their problems, but also those of others. They have the unique ability to spread information by word of mouth.[82]

Salesmen, Gladwell's final type of individual affecting the messaging of change, are the persuaders who support the message. The salesmen possess a unique likeable aura consisting of a combination of energy, charm, and enthusiasm. He argued they are often extremely optimistic and could be considered workaholics. These attributes allow them to get others to buy into something even when everyone else has failed. They use verbal and visual persuasion, identified by facial expressions and physical gestures,

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when transmitting information from one individual to another.[83] The strategic leader who

effectively identifies and leverages the personality traits of: the mavens to collect and

share the information; the connectors to bring together all of the key players facilitating

the change process; and the salesmen to get the message out and persuade others,

possesses tremendous potential to influence a group.[84]

Arguably the most important skill a leader must develop is the ability to

understand the individual characteristics and associated strengths and weaknesses of

the individuals in any society or group. In the book, *Type Talk at Work,* Otto Kroeger

identified how leaders often fail to understand the importance of the individuals;

because they are more focused on defining the mechanics and definitions of leadership

instead of focusing on the characteristics and traits of the individuals being led within

the organization.[85] As a result, the leader must not only understand that society is

comprised of individual followers, but more importantly how each type of personality

interacts. This allows the leader to identify the right motivation to drive change by

leveraging the diversity of the individual. When focusing on affecting cultural change, it

is even more critical for a leader to understand the diverse capabilities each individual

brings to society.

From the descriptions of the pioneer, prospector, settler, connector, maven, and

salesmen a leader has the tools to identify key individuals to target and to affect

change. With these definitions it is possible for the strategic leader to identify the

corresponding Myers Briggs-Type Indicators that match the appropriate descriptions

supporting each of these critical change agents. The Myers-Briggs measurement

instrument identifies and describes sixteen different personality types that allow an

individual to objectively view others. This process known as typewatching allows a

leader to appreciate our differences, suspending judgments or bias.[86] These sixteen

personality types are composed of eight preferences grouped into four pairs based on

an individual's preference (**E**xtravert vs. **I**ntrovert, **S**ensing vs. I**N**tuition, **T**hinking vs.

Feeling, and **J**udging vs. **P**erceiving).[87] This means an individual prefers to be either an

extravert or an Introvert. For instance an extrovert probably "knows a lot of people, and

counts many of them among close friends."[88] On the other hand, an introvert tends to

"enjoy the peace and quiet of having time to themselves."[89] Additionally, the sixteen

personality types can be broken into any pairing of two letters for general comparison.[90]

There is, however, a generally accepted, less random, comparison of pairings known as

temperaments (**NF**, **NT**, **SJ**, and **SP**) to predict individual preferences.[91]

Figure 5, applies the Myers-Briggs personality type selection to the cultural

change agents described by Gladwell.

Gladwell's Cultural Change Agents	Myers-Briggs Personality Type
Connectors	**ESTP**, ISFP, ISTP, ESFP
Mavens	**INTP**, INTJ, ENTP, ENTJ
Salesmen	**ENFJ**, ENFP, INFJ, INFP

Figure 5. Myers-Briggs Personality Type Matched to Cultural Change Agents[92]

Highlighted in bold is a possible personality type selected from the temperament that

best supports the description of Gladwell's cultural change agent. For example, the

temperament of the salesmen is best described as a NF. "The NFs strengths include

their ability to persuade and cooperate."[93] "The **ENFJ**'s preferences make them natural

convincers and smooth-talking persuaders."[94] This is not to say that one of the other **NF**

temperaments or a different pairing might produce a similar match. It is easy to see how this definition fits with the description of the salesmen described earlier in this study. Armed with an understanding of the personality type for a specific change agent, a strategic leader can select, identify, and empower individual change agents within a group. The last thing a leader must understand in order to influence change is how to message that change within the group.

<u>Messaging Change</u>

A leader who is aware of the culture of the individuals in an organization can influence change in the society or group. The leader must develop the right strategic message to emplace and ensure the change agents and targeted groups in a society are focused on change. A leader must also establish and manages an effective message by providing the proper climate to ensure cultural change is applied and understood.

A good strategic leader possesses the ability to change cultures using embedding and reinforcing mechanisms. Schein identified the six embedding mechanisms as those techniques, usually leader driven and focused, used to place changes into a culture; while the six reinforcing mechanisms support the embedding mechanisms and are generally more structured, systematic, or visibly identifiable.[95] Burke argued, sustaining change requires quickly getting change message data out through the connectors, mavens, and salesmen, analyzing the impacts of the change messages, and adjusting to alternate change methods if necessary to continue to drive the change. The key to affecting change is embedded in the ability, of those responsible for directing the change effort, to understand how what they are doing relates to and supports the required change.[96] A leader with a firm understanding of individual traits,

coupled with an in depth understanding of culture and the relationship to the individual and groups, must finally provide the appropriate climate to enhance the group's efficiency and effectiveness.

To support a climate of change, the leader is responsible for establishing a climate which facilitates development of the individuals and the group by providing vision and direction. The climate of the group links the individual to the organization, through the perceptions of individuals within the group, defining how those group members interact with one another.[97] Effective leaders understand that the climate is comprised of the cultural grouping of individuals in the targeted society or group. The leader's climate must not only empower subordinates but also underwrite honest mistakes. The leader implementing and overseeing the change develops a strong climate by keeping espoused and enacted values aligned. This means leader's espoused beliefs, values, and attitudes as written or stated are exactly the same ones used when the leader acts to affect change.[98]

Conclusion

To develop mentally agile leaders - required in the fast paced, information centric, globally connected world – they must understand any group within a society is comprised of individuals from various backgrounds, cultures, and environments. Each of these individuals comes with unique characteristics and traits, which if the leader can properly identify and nurture, can facilitate a leader's ability to affect change in an organization. By understanding the groupings, subcultures, and underlying foundations of culture, leaders can apply the proper analytical tools to select embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to strengthen groups. Finally, leaders must help groups build traits to mold, develop, and recognize the individual and group dynamics in societies in

order to affect change and maintain a climate that facilitates understanding. Leaders who understand culture and how to influence change improve the military profession, strengthen our understanding, and apply lessons to better individuals on a team or group at any level.

Endnotes

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